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Downtown Developments

In September, the City Council, following the Planning Commission's lead, unanimously approved the Downtown Master Plan. The plan now becomes a part of City-County Comprehensive Plan and will guide downtown redevelopment for the next twenty years.

However, time and redevelopment wait for no plan. While gearing up to promote key Master Plan catalyst projects, Urban Development is also focusing attention on several Downtown and Haymarket projects that are already underway.

Eatery Openings

New restaurants are entering the downtown scene. **Noodles and Co.** opened this month in the old Rock and Roll Runza Building at 14th and P Streets.

The Blue Orchid Thai Restaurant is scheduled for a 2006 opening in Federal Place, the former Old Federal Building.

Scooters, an Omaha-based coffee shop, has opened the first of two planned downtown locations on the corner of 11th and O Streets.

The artistically inspired, locally owned and operated **Café M 13** is open at 13th and L Streets.

Planting Bed Improvements

Over the past several months, the Urban Development Department has worked with the Downtown Lincoln Association to improve numerous downtown planting beds. The result is a long overdue upgrade. Pop-up sprinkler heads and remote controls have been installed in select beds and have provided a more reliable watering system. With a new watering system in

place, we were able to infill many planting beds with an array of perennials. Expect an explosion of color in downtown next Spring as these improvements take root.

Streetscape Enhancements

Key downtown properties have added sidewalks and other streetscape amenities this fall. The US Bank buildings at M Street between 12th and 13th Streets and the former Rock-n-Roll Runza building at 14th and P Streets are now fronted by dramatically improved streetscape conditions.

Government Square

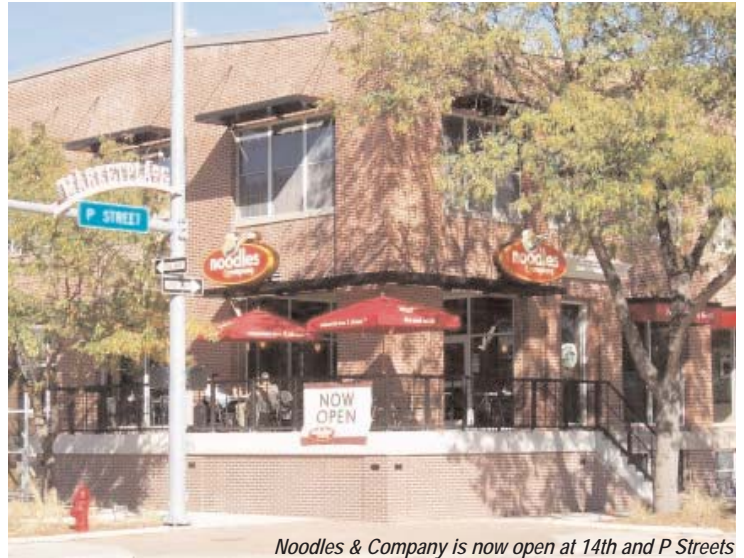
Recently, a contract was awarded to develop a park on the northwest corner of 10th and O Streets adjacent to Old City Hall. Scheduled for completion in Spring 2006, this new "Government Square Park" will include a fountain, benches, ornamental fencing and lighting -- all designed to complement the block's historic buildings.

8th Street Streetscape

The dust has finally settled on 8th Street. Expanded sidewalks and brick corner nodes, street furnishings and lighting fixtures now highlight 8th Street from O Street to the Haymarket pedestrian bridge. The improvements are designed to build on the district's unique architectural character. The results enhance the Haymarket's pedestrian environment and support the district's continued development as a restaurant and retail destination.

Salvation Army Building

Redevelopment is underway at the former location of the Salva-



Noodles & Company is now open at 14th and P Streets

tion Army store at 8th and P Streets. There are big changes in store for this collection of four buildings. The owner/developers are planning a mixed-use development with street level retail/commercial space paired with upper level housing. New exterior treatments will unify the four buildings and add another distinctive Haymarket dock at this key intersection.

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New plantings on M, 12th to 13th St.



Wider sidewalks are helping make 8th Street more pedestrian friendly

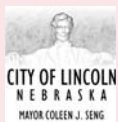
What Will You Nominate?

The Community Development Task Force needs your eyes. Frankly, they need nominations for the **2006 Lincoln CD Week Awards**. Look around your community and your neighborhood. Is there a project that impresses you? Please nominate it!

The nomination form will be in the *Neighborhood Extra* on November 26th and December 31st. It will also be posted on the City Web page at: www.lincoln.ne.gov, keyword: *urban*. Nominations are due to the Urban Development Department by January 18, 2006.

Nominated projects must: be within city limits, have used some government funds, be a physical improvement completed in 2005, and can not have won this award before.

Criteria considered for selecting winners include: community impact -- both level & duration, innovation, efficient use of government funds as well as other resources, and neighborhood / community / citizen involvement.



THE URBAN PAGE

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AN AFFAIR OF THE HEART

The biannual *Heart of Lincoln Home Tour* was once again a success. On October 9th, neighbors, old home advocates, and other interested parties explored some of Lincoln's greatest treasures in our central neighborhoods. The tour showcased ten sites including eight historic homes and two historic public spaces: F Street Rec Center and Christ Temple Mission. Seven of the Heart of Lincoln neighborhoods were represented: Irvingdale, Everett, Woods Park, Hartley, Malone/Hawley, University Place, and East Campus.

Most of the homes reported hosting 500-650 visitors, as tour-goers were treated to a wide variety of decorating styles from traditional Victorian to ultramodern. Homeowners commented on the many people who stopped to talk and share their "old house" stories. Several visitors said they were now "full of ideas" about renovating their own older homes. Even local builders and remodelers visited the homes for inspiration.

The **Realtors® Association of Lincoln** was the major funding sponsor for the tour. Realtors® held 18 open houses at homes near tour sites. Lists of nearby homes for sale were distributed at each of the tour sites.

According to Lynne Schroeder, a Realtor® and Community Development Task Force member, the tour is a "great way for people to see the realized potential of an older home in an established neighborhood." She had great turnout at her open houses during



One of the toured homes, 1910 Peach Street, was built in 1910 and it still retains its leaded glass windows, oak woodwork and floors. Historically compatible additions include the "tin" ceiling in the dining room and light fixtures.

the tour, and feels the tour will generate new interest in owning older homes.

Heart of Lincoln is an **Urban Development Department** and **NeighborWorks®Lincoln** project that is managed by the **CenterStar Marketing Group**. Its purpose is to promote Lincoln's historic, central neighborhoods by promoting responsible homeownership, building neighborhood pride, and encouraging property improvement.

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New Park Space

Urban Development is partnering with the Parks & Recreation Department and Lincoln Haymarket Development Corporation to create new Haymarket park space. This fall, a donated sculpture entitled **Listen** will be installed at the southern end of the Haymarket pedestrian bridge on 8th Street. This sculpture will serve as an entryway into an open green space that the Parks Department is developing adjacent to the bridge.

While work on the exciting catalyst projects in the Downtown promises to be a focus of future activities, the Urban Development Department is pleased to support private redevelopment in downtown and the Haymarket through these types of projects.

Right: "Listen" under construction. Background has been softened to make the sculpture more easily discernable.



WELL-TIMED WORDS

Workforce Summit

The *6th Annual Governor's Summit on Workforce Development* will be Wednesday and Thursday, November 9 & 10 at The DoubleTree Hotel in Omaha. The Summit is designed to provide workforce information to educators, elected officials, economic developers, employers, and anyone interested in the challenges we all face in workforce development.

The conference begins at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, with a welcome and award ceremony featuring Governor Dave Heineman. Conference speakers include Dr. Mae Jemison, the first African-American Woman to enter space, and Dr. Joseph Mancusi, one of America's outstanding motivational speakers and leadership trainers. The conference concludes at noon on Thursday.

For more information, contact Kim Johanns at 471-3418 or visit the Nebraska Workforce Development Web site:

www.workforce.state.ne.us/govsummit/

Kristina & the One Stop

A number of Hurricane Katrina evacuees from Mississippi and Louisiana have made their way to Lincoln. For some, Lincoln is a temporary stop. For others, Lincoln may be their new home. Most don't know what is left of their homes and workplaces. Some are still looking for family members.

Two of Urban Development's Workforce Investment staff members are volunteering to help some of the families get back on their feet. They have volunteered to assist these individuals in finding housing, food, health care, employment, and whatever else is needed. About 26 evacuees have received assistance from the One Stop: finding employment, applying for disaster assistance, and general labor market information.

Hartley: New Focus Area

Urban Development Department staff have been working with the Hartley Neighborhood Association to develop and produce the *Hartley Focus Area Plan*. Hartley differs from other focus areas in that it isn't a contiguous area or concentration of blocks within the neighborhood. The Hartley Focus Area consists of two corridors: 33rd Street from O to X, and R Street from 27th to 33rd Streets. In addition to the corridors, the new focus area includes Kleckner Court and Walnut Court, directly south of R Street.

Urban Development staff worked with other City departments and a committee from the Hartley Neighborhood Association to identify neighborhood strengths, weaknesses, goals, and strategies. The first project in the neighborhood involved rocking and grading several alleys. Next, a streetscape project for R Street is being designed, with the first phase of implementation scheduled for Spring 2006.

Free to Grow...Grows!

Free to Grow has started work in a third area of the Clinton neighborhood bounded by 27th, 30th, Holdrege, and Dudley Streets. Free to Grow team members include representatives from the Lincoln Action Program, NeighborWorks@Lincoln, Clinton Elementary School and several City departments: Police, Urban Development, Building and Safety, and Health.

The Free to Grow team concentrates on improving the quality of life for residents by addressing crime, the environment, substandard housing, and health-related issues. So the team has helped neighbors establish Neighborhood Watch groups, increased code enforcement, increased police involvement, and coordinated neighborhood and graffiti clean-ups.

Rebuilding Together Adds Staff

Rebuilding Together-Lincoln, Inc., a non-profit organization assisting low-income elderly or disabled homeowners with free home repairs, has named *Ann Chaffin* as executive director. Ann's extensive experience in marketing and public relations will help *Rebuilding Together* be more visible in the community.

Greg Key of The Weitz Company, Inc. is a new volunteer board member. Greg's long experience and contacts in the construction industry will also further the organization's goals.

Last year, *Rebuilding Together - Lincoln* rehabilitated 23 homes, bringing the total homes served to 86 since the affiliate started in 1999. To apply for services or to volunteer time or money for a project, call *Rebuilding Together* at (402) 434-6313.

Urban Development staff also work for Rebuilding Together. Mary Stanley is a volunteer board member and Erin McGovern is the construction manager.

Our Green Infrastructure

The 112,000 trees on City property are a valuable component of Lincoln's environment. In fact, based on data from the National Arbor Day Foundation, our community forest or "green infrastructure" has an estimated value of over \$60 million dollars.

While many public expenditures require investments in projects that will gradually decrease in value over time, trees increase in value over time. In tough budgetary times, careful management of our "green infrastructure" is still a sound investment. Careful management includes tree planting, trimming, maintenance, and removal, while taking into consideration aesthetics, safety, and efficiency.

Studies done by the USDA Forest Service, Center for Urban Forest Research, have shown that for every dollar a city invests in the care and maintenance of its municipal trees, its residents receive two to four dollars in environmental benefits. Lincoln's "green infrastructure" is no exception. Adequate funding for its maintenance is a good use of our tax dollars.

- Steve Schwab, City Arborist

Arbor Day ceremony in Pentzer Park, with Mayor Seng and members of the Community Forestry Advisory Board



Get Some (City) Action

Want to report a pothole, a barking dog, or a dilapidated house? The *InterLinc Action Center* is your new online tool to request all non-emergency city services. Go to:

lincoln.ne.gov, keyword: **action** and use the topic, department or word search options to direct your service request. Pop up windows can help with information about city ordinances, what they mean in layman's terms, who to contact, the process, or maps.

Once you've placed a request, you'll even be able to track which department is working with it and what actions have been taken.

GARDEN CENTER TRANSPLANT?

The South Salt Creek Neighborhood could soon be enjoying the convenience of having a garden center located right in the neighborhood. Two years ago, Urban Development Department staff began working to relocate Arck Foods, a ham processor, out of this residential neighborhood to an expanded facility near Highway 77 and Interstate 80. After the successful relocation, the City purchased the old facility at 4th & F Streets to make room for a more neighborhood-friendly use: single-family housing.

Unfortunately, there were obstacles to using the site for housing: environmental issues from a previously removed underground storage tank, flood plain issues, and the historic designation for a small, adjacent house

which limited use on that part of the site. Taken together, the obstacles forced the City to begin looking for options other than housing.

With a mini-park ruled-out, neighborhood-friendly uses were proving difficult to find. Happily, the City was approached by a retail greenhouse operator looking to relocate his business back to Lincoln. Plans for the greenhouse and garden center will cap the potentially contaminated soil under a new parking lot and will provide beautiful views for the whole neighborhood to enjoy.

Plans for the project must still be approved by the Planning Commission and City Council, but the South Salt Creek Neighborhood Association is pleased and excited.

QUARTERLY QUOTE

"For the first time in memory, I had football fans walking into my shop from P Street on a game day! The new sidewalks along 8th Street should make the entire corridor more retail friendly. Finally."

Geary Buckwalter, owner of details, details..., a shop in the Haymarket that specializes in contemporary decorative home accessories and unusual gifts of good design

REDEVELOPMENT: WEST O AND MORE

At the request of the Mayor's Office, Urban Development contracted with Hanna Keelan Associates, Inc., to conduct a *Blighted and Substandard Study of West O Street*. The study was completed and approved by the Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Commission in June, 2005. It was approved by the Lincoln City Council in September along with the *West O Redevelopment Plan*, which was prepared by Urban Development Department staff.

Typically, redevelopment plans follow blight studies and detail redevelopment opportunities within the area that has been determined blighted.

The West O Street Redevelopment area stretches along O Street from NW 70th Street to 9th Street and consists of approximately 1,361 total acres. Several projects are already underway and there have been many inquiries about redeveloping other areas of the corridor. One of the more important parts of the redevelopment plan will take more time -- designing a streetscape

that signifies the importance of West O Street, both as an entryway to Lincoln and as a viable business area.

Urban Development has also undertaken other blight studies at the request of the Mayor's Office. One is in the area of N. 56th Street, roughly between 40th and 70th, Bluff Road and Fletcher Avenue. Another is along South Street, between 6th and 18th Streets. When/if these blight studies are approved, Urban Development Department staff will prepare redevelopment plans for these areas as well.